

EMERGENCY AND SAFETY POLICY

The Clarkson Public Library attempts to provide a safe environment for all who use the library as well as keeping the collection materials safe at all times. Despite our best efforts emergencies may arise. These guidelines are to protect and reduce risk to life and materials. In the event of a major disaster involving a wider portion of our community the City of Clarkson Standard Operating Procedure for Disaster Response would be followed.

I. Weather emergencies

A. Tornado or violent storm

1. When warranted, staff will monitor weather conditions using radio and/or the internet. When Colfax County is in a watch or warning, staff will follow the procedures established for that situation. If time allows, patrons must leave the building or if there is little or no time to evacuate the patrons and staff should take shelter away from windows and exterior walls, hiding under furniture if they cannot get to an interior room such as the restrooms. Everyone should protect their heads as much as possible and avoid any open stack area.

B. Snow Storms

- 1 The library may open late or close early when winter weather conditions present a danger to staff and patrons. The library will follow the actions of the City of Clarkson during normal business hours and the Library Director will be authorized to close the library during other times.
2. Maximum effort will be made to maintain the normal library operating hours. However, if the library is closed due to bad weather, staff will post a notice on the front entrance. The Library Director will notify the Board President of the closing as soon as possible.
3. Programs for all ages will be cancelled whenever the Clarkson School District calls off school because of inclement weather, whether or not the library closes.

II. Facility Emergencies

A. Fire

1. At the first sign of smoke or flame, staff should investigate the situation to determine the location and extent of the problem. If the problem can be easily contained staff should proceed to do so. If there is any doubt about containing the fire, staff should immediately call 911 and then evacuate the building, pulling the closest alarm to notify all patrons.
2. Staff will familiarize themselves with the location of the fire extinguisher in the building.
3. Staff should await emergency personnel at the front entrance if possible, to notify them of the fire location and ask patrons to gather a safe distance from the building.

B. Loss of utilities

1. If electrical power is lost for at least two hours or if the loss makes the temperature or the lighting in the library difficult for working, the library may close until the problem is resolved.
2. If water is shut off to the library all restrooms must be closed off immediately. Patrons must be made aware that they will have to use alternate restrooms outside of the library.
3. If the heat pump malfunctions and the temperature drops enough to make working in or using the library uncomfortable, the library should close until the problem is resolved.

C. Hazardous Waste

1. If carbon monoxide detectors warn of danger or if other chemical fumes are noticeable, staff should immediately evacuate the building and call 911.
2. If a traffic accident in the vicinity of the library involves hazardous materials, the library staff should follow the directives of the Clarkson Police department and City emergency personnel.

D. Plumbing Problems or water leaks

1. If a plumbing problem is limited to a single area the staff will close off the affected area and call the appropriate personnel to fix the problem if they are unable to do so their own.
2. If a plumbing problem or water leak affects a major portion of the library the Library director or staff present will close the library if deemed necessary. City crews can be called upon for immediate assistance and professional help should be contacted as quickly as possible.

E. Bomb threat

1. Staff receiving a bomb threat will evacuate all staff and patrons to a safe place across the street.
2. When a bomb threat is received by phone or other means, police should be notified immediately.
3. When police arrive on the scene, staff will provide them with the pertinent information taken by phone call or other means.
4. If the bomb threat is at a nearby facility, evacuation of the library will be based on the judgment of emergency personnel.

III. Personal Safety

A. Health Emergencies or Accidents

1. Staff should exercise caution when assisting anyone with a health complaint. Make the person comfortable and call 911 in the event of a serious problem.
2. At no time should staff dispense medication, even aspirin, to the public.
3. Following the incident, staff should report the incident to the Library Director and fill out an Incident Report (Appendix IV) as instructed.

B. Patron unruliness or violence

1. Patrons are expected to conduct themselves in a manner that shows respect to other patrons and staff. Disruptive behaviors as listed in the Library Use policy –General G. will not be tolerated and discipline according to policy will be followed.

2. Parents/ Guardians are responsible for the behavior of their children while in the library. Children who are being disruptive and do not respond to a staff member request to stop will be asked to leave the building and if necessary, a parent may be called to pick up the child at the library.
3. If at any time a patron situation escalates or if a person refuses to listen to staff, the police will be called immediately.
4. Patrons who remain on library premises after being asked to leave, or patrons who enter the library during a time period in which they are banned from the library, will be subject to arrest and prosecution for trespassing. An Incident Report form will be filed.

IV. Reporting emergencies

- A. All emergency situations should be reported to the Library Director as soon as possible. The Library director will contact the Board President and the City Administrator as appropriate. The full library board will be informed of the emergency at the next regular board meeting.
- B. Because timely and accurate reporting of emergencies is crucial, library staff should report in writing the incident, including date, time, those present as witnesses and as much detail as possible regarding what occurred. All information should go through the Library Director to the proper sources.